HARAMBEE FLAME

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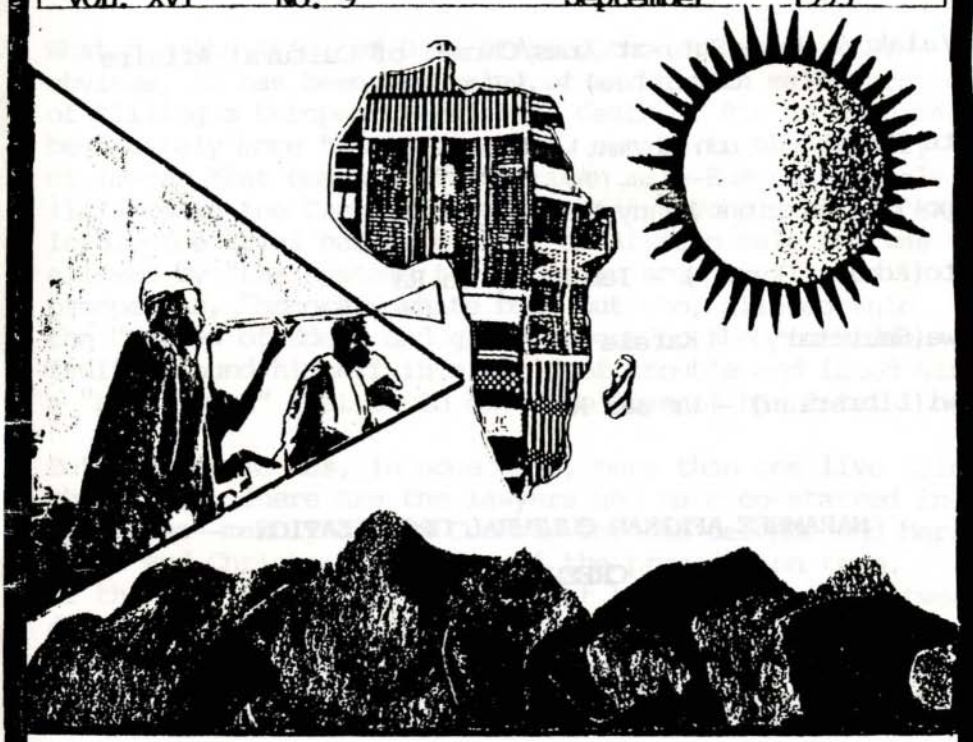

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HARAMBEE AFRIKAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

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HARAMBEE AFRIKAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

CREED

Together we seek to know that which is us, to expand our collective consciousness of who we are and whence we come. We exalt in thee fact that Afrikans are beautiful in our own right rather than at the expense of any other ethnic group. And in the true spirit of the Swahili word, "harambee," we promote the idea that cultural awareness is germane to human growth.

Commentary

It's just about over with. After these many months of testimony, examination and cross-examination, verbal gun-slinging between the defense and prosecution, analyses by "legal experts," performances by the "dancing Itos," etc., the "trial of the century" is winding down. Media speculation has the trial ending within the next few weeks.

What has the trial of O.J. Simpson been? At its most obvious, it has been the trial of an African male accused of killing a European female(The death of Ron Goldman has been barely more than incidental, owning to the potency of images that emanate from African male-European female liaisons in the Caucasian-supremacist psyche). On another level, the trial has been about an African male who was allowed by "the system" to become an economically prosperous, "honorary white boy" but who, allowed into the "Garden of Eden" and given access to the "forbidden fruit," found himself in a world of trouble and faced with a "banishment" that could mean the loss of his life.

But this drama has, in some ways, more than one live main character. There are the lawyers who have co-starred in this case--mainly Johnny Cochran for the defense and Marcia Clark and Christopher Darden of the prosecution team. Of the many verbal skirmishes that have been waged between defense and prosecution, some of the most acidic have been between Cochran and Darden, with Cochran in the role--at least from our perspective--of "handsome stranger" in town to save our homey, O.J., from "Sheriff White Bart" and his posse of vengeful gun-slingers. Darden, on the other hand, though being the same color as Johnny Cochran, is riding with "White Bart's" posse. He's in the mix so the posse doesn't look too much like a Night-Rider lynching party. But it looks to us like that anyway and Darden has peeped this, knows he's looking to us like an Uncle Tom. This revelation **is** televised and Chris has been, ironically enough, on the defensive.

As this story has been unfolding, both sides have had their hits and their misfirings. There have been moves and counter-moves, with neither the forces of "White Bart"

nor our homey's "dream team" striking with devastation. But now we have the Fuhrman tapes and a character, Mark Fuhr[er]man, whom the prosecution has tried to portray as cut right out of a Norman Rockwell painting, looking more like an image akin to another famous Rockwell.

Smoke is clearing and Night-Riders are ducking for cover. In the meantime, the talk of the town has moved from "hung jury" to "acquittal." And, of course, if O.J. Simpson is acquitted, "hung jury" could take on a very different meaning.

But while the "trial of the century" is drawing to a close, there are thousands of other Africans throughout the U.S. awaiting their trials. What they know is that they won't get what O.J. is getting; namely, fair trials. While it's true that Simpson has been found guilty by the Caucasian-run media, he **is** getting his Constitutionally "guaranteed" "day in court." One, he does have a jury of his peers, the majority of the jurors being African; and two, he is represented by competent counsel. It has been said that he has the best defense money can buy. Actually, he has probably some of the best defense **his** money can buy. If O.J.'s lawyers comprise a "dream team," we can imagine what kind of defense he'd have if he had **serious** bank.

If we can imagine the quality of counsel the wealthy can afford, we don't have to imagine the quality of counsel the vast majority of Africans chilling in U.S. jails right now are going to get. Money talks, mo' money talks mo', and no money means "public defender." And even in the rare cases when Brothers and Sisters get public defenders who are conscientious, their caseloads are too big to allow them to spend sufficient time and energy to properly defend their clients; they don't have access to the kinds of budgets that enable them to secure the services of investigators, psychologists, medical and/or other experts, etc.; and they often lack trial experience. For Brothers and Sisters facing big time or capital punishment(state-sanctioned murder), this can be especially disastrous.

Under these circumstances, compounded by the likelihood that an African defendant **won't** have a public defender who is conscientious, the Brother or Sister will never

see a jury. All over the U.S., prosecutors are fond of pointing to conviction rates of around ninety percent or more. This isn't due to their being such hot-shots but to the fact that African and other economically poor defendants are talked in to copping pleas. These defendants, whether innocent or guilty of the charges they're facing, know that they stand little or no chance before the all-Caucasian or majority-Caucasian juries that they'll face if they opt to take their cases to trial. They know they'll be considered guilty, unless **proven** innocent. They fear retaliatory sentencing from judges pissed off that they've been "inconvenienced." Besides all this, the average defendant knows damned little about criminal law. He or she doesn't have a clue as to what's behind door #one, or any of the other doors, other than to know it's probably a booby prize.

Not all defendants of little economic means get the "services" of public defenders. Some can afford private counsel. But they can't afford the "best defense money can buy" and typically have no protection against being bled dry by shysters or sold down the river by lawyers looking for political or corporate upward mobility. Nor are they prepared to deal with the professional paternalism they're likely to face, by which lawyers operate as if they know everything and their clients just fell off flat-bed trucks and act toward their clients as though they have no interests in their own fates.

Returning to O.J., as we recall, his original defense team had no Africans. Later on, Johnny Cochran was added, probably at the suggestion of one of the Caucasian counsel, figuring an all-Caucasian battery of lawyers would serve to reinforce, in the eyes of African jurors, an image of Simpson as "honorary white boy" and cut into the empathy factor. Likewise, Chris Darden was added to the prosecution team as an after-thought. Somebody in the prosecutor's office realized that a little color would, as mentioned earlier, diminish the image of the District Attorney's Office as "Night-Rider lynching party." But while these high-powered Caucasian lawyers saw the usefulness and, particularly in the case of Cochran, recognized the skill of the African attorneys now involved in the trial, too

many African defendants, economically poor or not, shun African legal representation in favor of Caucasians when they find themselves facing criminal charges.

We know the rationalizations: "White lawyers are part of the system and know how it works," "Judges can relate better to their own," etc. But these **are** rationalizations. The real deal is that too many of us, subconsciously or otherwise, have been successfully programmed to believe in the inferiority of ourselves and our people. We believe Caucasian lawyers, physicians, and other professionals(except for professional athletes and entertainers) know their stuff better than their African counterparts.

Just as a lot of us look to Caucasian professionals for help and shun our own, many of us--especially, African males--look to Caucasians for romance, which is what got our homey into the mess he's in. Innocent or guilty, O.J. would certainly not be under the size gun he's under were the victims he's accused of killing African. But O.J., let into the "Garden of Eden" of fame and fortune, either felt he needed to have his "forbidden fruit" to convince him of where he was or, having gotten there, was **driven** by his new identity to seek out his "forbidden fruit."

If O.J. is guilty, it was psychological slavery that was his downfall--"Massa, I just gotta have my white woman!!" But O.J. is not alone in this enslavement. There are plenty more African male "super-stars" and former "super-stars" who have lost their eyesight when it comes to African women because they have only had eyes for Caucasians. And O.J.'s case is but one of many in which the loss or threat of loss of the Caucasian female's love or lust has driven a psychologically enslaved African male damned near out of his mind. O.J.'s is but one of many cases in which an African has been driven to ruin.

As of this writing, just two days ago, the University of Nebraska's star I-back and Heisman-trophy candidate, Lawrence Phillips was charged with assaulting an ex-girlfriend. He has since been dismissed from the team. The ex-girlfriend is Caucasian. And though it speaks ill of any male's "manhood" for him to beat a woman--any woman, it speaks ill of **African**

(Cont. on page 12)

Editorial Policy

The HARAMBEE FLAME is the monthly newsletter of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization(Nebraska State Pen chapter). Ours is a pan-Africanist publication, meaning that we view all people of African descent as one African people, having certain basic interests in common. Also, the HARAMBEE FLAME attempts to be Africentric, in that, through study of the history, cultures, and traditional values of African people, we seek to have and cultivate an African way of looking at things.

The main purposes of the HARAMBEE FLAME are to stimulate and inform. We list "stimulate" first because, more than anything else, we want our readers to be moved to question their/your own ideas, lives, and the circumstances in which we live and to challenge those things that must be challenged in order for us to move from a condition of mental and spiritual servitude and physical dependence upon Caucasian institutions to a state of collective self-determination. Toward this purpose, we present commentaries, poems, etc. These do not necessarily represent the official positions of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization.

The HARAMBEE FLAME provides information because wise people want to know what's going on and because certain kinds of information can stimulate the mind, inspire people to want to act, and influence them to pursue proper understanding so that the actions they take will be as effective as possible. The main vehicle we use to provide information is our "From Other Sources" feature in which we make an effort to provide news about the problems we African people are confronted by and the steps we are taking to resolve them. In this feature, we try to provide coverage of the activities of African people and developments affecting us in the U.S., the nations of Africa, and elsewhere. "Community News" is another vehicle.

We encourage you to submit your reports, essays, poems, etc. Please enclose stamped, self-addressed return envelope.

From Other Sources

Brothers Helping Brothers: Some Programs Around The Country

"Michael Cross, now the former director of the local Urban League's Male Responsibility Program...isn't alone in his endeavor to reach out to youth. In Detroit and other Black communities across the nation, growing armies of activists are setting up similar programs, each year shepherding thousands of troubled menchildren through the complex maze that is growing up young, Black and male in America. Their ranks are a mosaic of their communities--preachers, teachers, doctors, DJ's. Their methods of outreach run the gamut, from street patrols to training sessions to team sports. Their mission is clearly defined: raise up these young warriors before they become casualties.

"'We started this back in 1987', says Cross during a break in the 'responsibility' course...We need men to get with these guys and help their families bring these boys into manhood, because many of them don't really know what being a responsible Black man means. Most of the boys want to be one, but not all of them are sure how'.

"In Washington, D.C., the local chapter of Concerned Black Men Inc. (CBM) is showing them how. The group, which reaches out to about 1,000 young people each year, has established several events and mentoring programs in that area. Among them is an African Son-Rise Rites of Passage, a derivative of the ancient African tradition in which men formally usher boys into adulthood.

"'We teach those young boys five basic principles important to the development of positive adolescence and manhood: academic competence, cultural enrichment, history, entrepreneurship and physical fitness. It's a wholistic approach'...

"Concerned Black Men...developed its Shock Trauma program, in which young people visit the trauma center at Prince George's Hospital Center in Maryland for a first-hand look at the fruits of recklessness: gunshot wounds, drug overdose victims, bloodied bodies from drunk-driving accidents.

"'The idea is to make young people see that this macho attitude a lot of them have is not the way to go', says Barnes, a director in the School of Public Affairs at the University of Maryland, College Park...

"For some young men, however, bloodshed is hardly an unfamiliar sight. There will be no shocking some of them off the streets, says the Rev. Samuel C. Wood, a Boston minister. But he believes his group, The 10 Point Coalition, a confederacy of members from about 40 local religious institutions, can coax some of them away.

"So it is that each Friday night, one of the coalition's groups, the Brotherhood, takes to some of Boston's toughest streets to minister to young men about the dangers of drugs, gangs and violence...

"Wood says his group has influenced a number of gang members and drug peddlers to leave lives of crime for more productive roles in their communities...

"Through their Saturday Institute for Manhood Brotherhood Actualization program--SIMBA, for short--activists at the Wholistic Stress Control Institute in Atlanta make regular visits to more than 120 young men jailed at the Lorenzo Benn Youth Development Campus, a juvenile detention center, offering them prescriptions for turning their lives around. Eighty percent of the boys they work with are Black...

"SIMBA promotes conflict resolution, stress management and wholistic health...

"In San Francisco, volunteers from the Omega Boys Club offer a peer counseling program in the city's Youth Guidance Center and Juvenile Hall, lecturing and listening to hundreds of young men each year. The activists also alternate as advvocates during court proceedings and social workers from the public defender's office collaborate with probation officers to reduce recidivism.

"Despite this success of the program, Omega has become better known in recent years for another component of its outreach and violence-prevention efforts, the 'Street

Soldiers' radio show...the show offers a call-in forum for young people and adults on such issues as drugs and violence, as well as other local and state matters...

"...at the Challengers Boys and Girls Club in Los Angeles, Corey Dantzler and his father, Lou, also are capturing the attention of young Black men. Lou DAntzler started the club in 1968, when he began meeting with young men in South Central parks in the back of his pickup truck...

"In the years since, the Dantzlers have moved the group into an old grocery store in the heart of South Central and, through various sports and social programs, have turned out exemplary artists and athletes...

"'We build self-esteem through our programs', says Dantzler. 'We are here to give them an alternative besides the streets...But we also teach them to stay in their community and be a strong part of it, not to move away. We teach the teenagers to work with the younger kids'...

"'The parents who put their kids in the program must volunteer here at least four hours a month. We have parent meetings and get 400 to 500 mothers and fathers out here'.

"The Dantzlers say Challengers is also putting the finishing touches on a new program called Men InC. 'It means Men In Charge. We are going to target boys 12 on up and talk with them about everything from health issues to staying in school...'"

from "Helping Brothers In Need," pages 58-63, Oct. EMERGE (Washington, D.C.)

Africans And Latinos In L.A. Strike A Blow Against Violence

"Over a year ago, a surge in what one councilwoman described as 'unprecedented' violence between Black and Latino gangs in and around the most violent part of Venice--the Oakwood area--claimed at least 17 lives and left more than 50 people injured...

"But about ten months ago, both sides agreed to form a

cease-fire truce, ending two decades of fighting, and joining a growing number of sets in Los Angeles Countty that have formed a truce, initially started more than three years ago by Bloods and Crips sets in the Watts housing projects.

"'They just got tired of killing', said Melvyn Hayward, 46, who has been working with Venice's gangs, including the Shoreline Crips, for the past 25 years...

"Mr. Hayward said he believes that Blacks and Latinos are being squeezed from their low-income housing and homes to accomodate the growing population of whites moving back to the Oakwood area--prime real estate near Venice Beach-and that gang violence was being perpetuated by 'powers-that-be' to hasten that squeeze...

"'This is the baddest(most anticipated) of the truces', said Michael Zinzun, co-organizer of Community in Support of the Gang Truce, which last month organized a celebration at the International House of Blues in West Los Angeles that honored gang members from sets in Los Angeles, Compton and Long Beach that have upheld their truces...

"According to a police source, gang-related crimes in the Oakwood area have dropped significantly in the wake of the gang truce. The source also attributes the drop to a newly formed task force of at least six officers whose only duty is to patrol the area...

"'We are strong in Blackness', Mr. Hayward said. 'We are on the same wavelength with the Mexican Americans. We all could have a stronger alliance if the two races stick together.'"

-from "Black-Latino Gangs Offer Peace To L.A. Neighborhood," page 7, Aug. 30 THE FINAL CALL(Chicago, IL.)

Ghana's President Makes Moves On Behalf Of Ghanaian Women

"Ghana's President Jerry Rawlings has called for practical measures to relieve the African woman of her hardships and involve her in decision making...

"President Rawlings said one of the greatest inequalities on the African continent is unequal access to education. 'Education is the key to the future, and so long as our cultural attitudes deprive girls of equal opportunities for education and self-development, we will not see the full potential of our nations, our continent and the world', he added.

"Even in those African countries where approximately equal numbers of boys and girls begin primary education, he said, the proportion of girls steadily declines through secondary and tertiary education.

"To address this problem, Mr. Rawlings said, Ghana's ministry of education targetted some rural areas with an exceptionally high rate of female school drop outs for a pilot program in which school girls were provided with notebooks, pens, pencils and other very elementary needs.

"The result made a remarkable improvement in the rate of girls completing their courses, out of all proportion to the small assistance given, he said...

"'It...shows that for parents living close to the poverty line, even the minimal expenses required to keep a girl in attendance at our tuition-free state schools present a serious difficulty to the household', he added."

-from "Rawlings: More Power, Less Poetry For African Women," page 13, Aug. 16 THE FINAL CALL

MESSAGE FROM THE ALAGA(CHAIRMAN)

Hotep(Peace)! "Kumanda" is a name from the Afrikan country, Malawi. "Kumanda"(pronounced koo-mahn-dah), which is from the language of Ngoni, means "graveyard."

I consider my thoughts from the graveyard to be righteous, realistic, powerful, intellectual, and steadily forthcoming (alive!!), proving to me that mental reincarnation is an ongoing fact, despite physical incarceration.

Time after time, I have seen the stare of mental and emotional death. I have seen the multiple deaths of desire, laughter, youthfulness, prisoner-solidarity; the deaths of innocence, family unity and communication, friendship, and trust. I have seen the deaths of mental and physical manhood. I have seen in the kumanda the migration of physical man into the spiritual world. Every form of death you can best believe I have witnessed here in this kumanda of physical and cultural genocide/penitentiary.

"We" Afrikan prisoners, paraphrasing Sister Maya Angelou, "rise," even though the imperatives of white genetic survival try to permanently flatten us. We rise, even though we are fed an indaedquate diet of justice and mutual respect, while gluttonously continuing to swallow pride for a freedom we have yet to see. We rise above the systematic death and oppression to become the pall-bearers of this inhumane slave-master/slave system.

With the deaths of even the idea of "rehabilitation," human compassion, family and community support, the adult incarcerated males' ability to be providers, etc., how shall this present generation and the next generation of "vicious animals"(to quote a recent OMAHA WORLD HERALD editorial) rise above mental and physical slavery/death?

Nelson Mandela just didn't leave the cemetary/prison system alive on his own. Many Afrikan life-givers visited him, administered to his mind, while his soul was on ice. They shared with him pieces of their own souls, which they left with him. We must acknowledge that life is the only force that can give life to life.

(Cont. on page 14)

"manhood" that so many African males--athletes and entertainers in particular--are obsessed with Caucasian females.

If the media reportage is accurately reflecting the reality, there is a veritable epidemic of male assaults on females going on in this society. Whether this is indicative of an actual and substantial increase in these assaults or an increase in victims' willingness to file complaints, or both, is not clear. But that this is happening at all is pathetic and suggests a number of things about a large segment of the U.S. male population: disrespect for and/or hatred of girls and women, emotional immaturity, emotional/psychological insecurity, emotional stress due to factors outside of relationships and resulting in misdirected anger, etc. In any case, it must be said that one who is **physically** a man and can't get on with a female without resorting to pit-bull antics is clearly **not** a man in an emotional, psychological, and/or intellectual sense.

At best, a "man" who assaults his mate has some growing up to do or has personality disorders that he needs to work on. Such a "man" should take time out from members of the complementary sex until he grows up or gets his disorders fixed. At worst, a "man" who assault his mate is a **punk**, flat-out, who requires being disciplined by some **actual** men, in such a way that he learns that assaultive behavior is not so good for his health.

We understand that there are special pressures affecting African males in this society: fatherless rearing of far too many boys; male-aggressive gang culture; anti-female lyrics in rap and other popular music and messages in films, music, etc. that promote the disrespect of girls and women; unemployment and job insecurity, which tend to cause males to question their "manhood"; the Caucasian-supremacy system in general, which builds up anger, hostility, and bitterness in males; and other pressures. And, unquestionably, **we** need to be establishing more programs to help us learn how to come with these pressures.

But while we are addressing the pressures on African males that result in the abuse of females, we must also address the pressures and influences that lead to the worship by many African males of their "snow queens." Africans who

publish magazines and newspapers, produce television programs, and are otherwise involved in media operations must take a stand in support of the idea of **African men for African women and African women for African men.** They must cease the practice of promoting, directly or indirectly, "jungle fever."

When an African talk-show host attacks Sisters or Brothers, who are opposed to Africans dating or mating with Caucasians and/or other non-Africans, for being "racist" or otherwise non-"progressive," he or she is promoting "jungle fever." When an African film or television director or writer puts out a film, television show, or music video glamourizing African-Caucasian romance/sex, he or she is promoting "jungle fever," as are the Africans who perform in these roles. When an African-owned publication or African-produced television program runs ads for products designed to lighten our skin, straighten our hair, "change" our eye color, etc., that program or publication is pushing a Caucasian standard for physical beauty. It is pushing the idea that African females should emulate the looks of Caucasian females and that African males should be attracted to these physically Europeanized Sisters. Since there is no great leap between an African male being attracted to an African copy of a Caucasian female and that same African being attracted to the real thing, the running of these ads amounts to promoting "jungle fever."

From the case of Jack Johnson to that of O.J. Simpson and beyond, our history in this country is rife with instances of ruination of African lives and reputations due to "jungle fever." Of course, it can be argued that there are and have been many African-Caucasian romantic couplings that have brought happiness to those involved. But we have to look at our collective situation and at our collective needs and interests. As we have spoken of many times in the FLAME, there is a severe shortage in this country of African males, a much more severe shortage of African **men**, a great number of African females without reliable male companionship and a great number of African children without visible and/or functioning fathers. Brothers, open your eyes to the love and beauty of your own.

Editor

Very few dead men are self-starters. A spiritually deceased though breathing, human being cannot return life to him or her self, let alone a family unit or a community. Likewise, a person who has no fincancial life cannot provide material life to self or to family or community. When we return to society from our graveyards, we're not returning or going to the suburbs. We're returning to the "concrete jungles," the "black ghettos." So it is vital that Afrikans/Black people/ Alkebulanians encourage us cemetary-dwellers to become useful members of society; but not only this, but also to demand that we manifest new life.

When I say "new life," I mean in all areas of Neely Fuller, Jr.'s "nine areas of people activity": economics, education, entertainment, labor, law, politics, religion, sex, and war. (See Fuller's UNITED INDEPENDENT COMPENSATORY CODE/SYSTEM/ CONCEPT WORKBOOK).

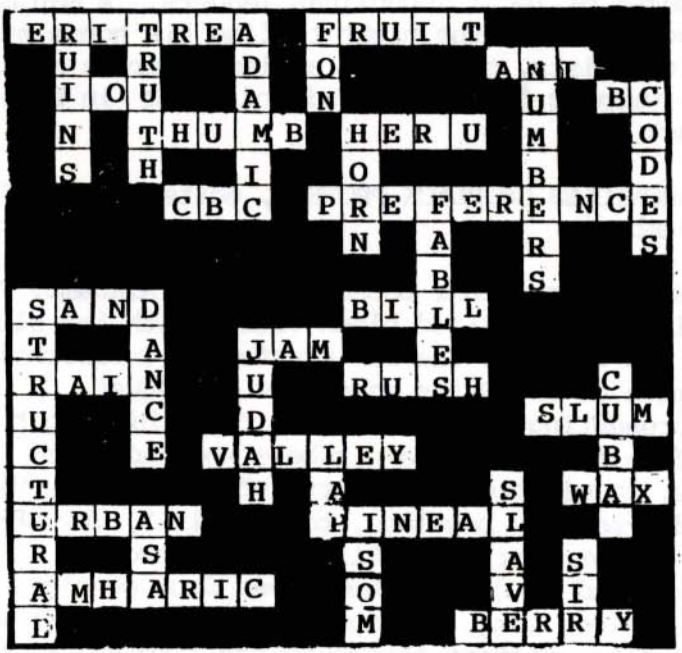
Bluntly speaking, some Afrikans resting six feet deep deserve it. Yet for those resting unjustifiably/incarcerated, we ask you, Mighty Afrikan Community, where is the resuscitation from you, the life-givers?

"Where there is no struggle, there is no progress."

"Where there is no vision, the people shall perish."

Shaheed Khaleel Hamza

HARAMBEE FLAME AFRICENTRIC CROSSWORD PUZZLE #7 - Answers



Back In Time

The Ku Klux Klan had been founded in 1866 by six former Confederate officers as a social group for war veterans, in Pulaski, Tennessee. The next year, in a move to fight the pro-black legislation of Radical Reconstruction, the group formally reorganized as the "Invisible Empire of the South." Members robed themselves and their horses in white sheets, wore masks and cardboard hats, and in this attire they rode through the countryside at night to terrorize black people exercising their rights as citizens. The Klan's "Dead Books" listed the names of black men and their white allies--primarily, those who supported the Radical Republicans. Black leaders and white school teachers figured prominently in these books. Klansmen marched through towns carrying coffins marked with the names of local Republican leaders. A man might wake in the middle of the night to find his house surrounded by robed terrorists, or to find a flaming cross before his house--warning to cease his involvement in behalf of the black man.

Source: CHRONICLES OF BLACK PROTEST, edited by Bradford Chambers

Taking its name from thhe Loundes County, Alabama, Freedom Party, which had mobilized black voters with the slogan "Vote for the Panther, the BPP started in California in the aftermath of the Watts rebellion in August 1965...Representing a strain of militant thinking that extended from the early slave rebels who had armed themselves, to eighteenth-century activists Henry Highland Garnet and Frederick Douglass, to Malcolm X, the BPP argued that, like other American citizens, they had the right to bear arms and to defend themselves from physical violence...Before long, J. Edgar Hoover targeted the BPP, calling it "the greatest threat to the internal security of the country," and the FBI mobilized to "expose, disrupt, misdirect, discredit, or otherwise neutralize" them. As informants infiltrated the party and the FBI sent anonymous letters to encourage violence between the Panthers and youth gangs, a series of explosive confrontations with the police signaled their eventual demise...

Source: CROSSING THE DANGER WATER: 300 YEARS OF AFRICAN AMER-

ICAN WRITING, edited and with an introduction by Deirdre Mullane